



RAVALLI COUNTY ATTORNEY

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January 31, 2008

Ravalli County Commissioners

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Ravalli County Commissioners

Sheriff Chris Hoffman

Sen. Rick Laible
P.O. Box 370
Darby, MT 59829
ricklaible@aol.com

Rep. Ron Stoker
P.O. Box 1059
Darby, MT 59829
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Sen. Jim G. Shockley
P.O. Box 608
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Rep. Ray Hawk
4878 Hoblitt Lane
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Rep. Bob Lake
P.O. Box 2096
Hamilton, MT 59840
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Rep. Gary MacLaren
429 Curlew Orchard Road
Victor, MT 59875
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Re: Ravalli County Emergency Mental Health Treatment

Dear Commissioners, Sheriff, and Legislators:

At the January 22, 2008, County Commissioner meeting, attended by many of you, the Commissioners and Sen. Shockley requested statistics regarding the increased number of emergency and involuntary mental health holds in Ravalli County. Attached please find two charts summarizing those statistics for the past ten (10) years.

The top chart (Cases Filed) reflects the numbers of involuntary cases which were actually petitioned into District Court. The numbers come from the Clerk of Court database. Note that in 2006 there was a slight decrease in filed cases, which I believe resulted from the County entering into contracts with Mental Health and Western Montana Addictions to provide services in our local Detention Center. The majority of our petitioned cases in 2007 did not originate from the jail, but from the Marcus Daly emergency room for individuals who do not have pending criminal cases. The Sheriff's Office provided a guard and transportation on all of these cases.

The bottom chart (Involuntary Holds) reflects those cases where individuals are held and evaluated at Marcus Daly and released on a treatment plan without the filing of a petition. These numbers come from the records of our office, as we should receive a referral worksheet from the hospital whenever someone is held for mental health evaluation. These numbers are in addition to the numbers in the top chart. The Sheriff's Office provided a guard on all of these cases, and there may be more individuals who were evaluated and released without a referral worksheet being sent to our office.

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You can see that these case numbers are increasing dramatically, and this makes any decrease in funding or services to Ravalli County particularly troubling. If you have any further questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Karen Mahar
Deputy

Encl: statistics chart

cc: John Bartos, Marcus Daly Memorial Hospital
Kim Miller, Program Director Riverfront Counseling
Jim Mason, Director Western Montana Addiction Services

Ravalli County Emergency Mental Health Contacts

